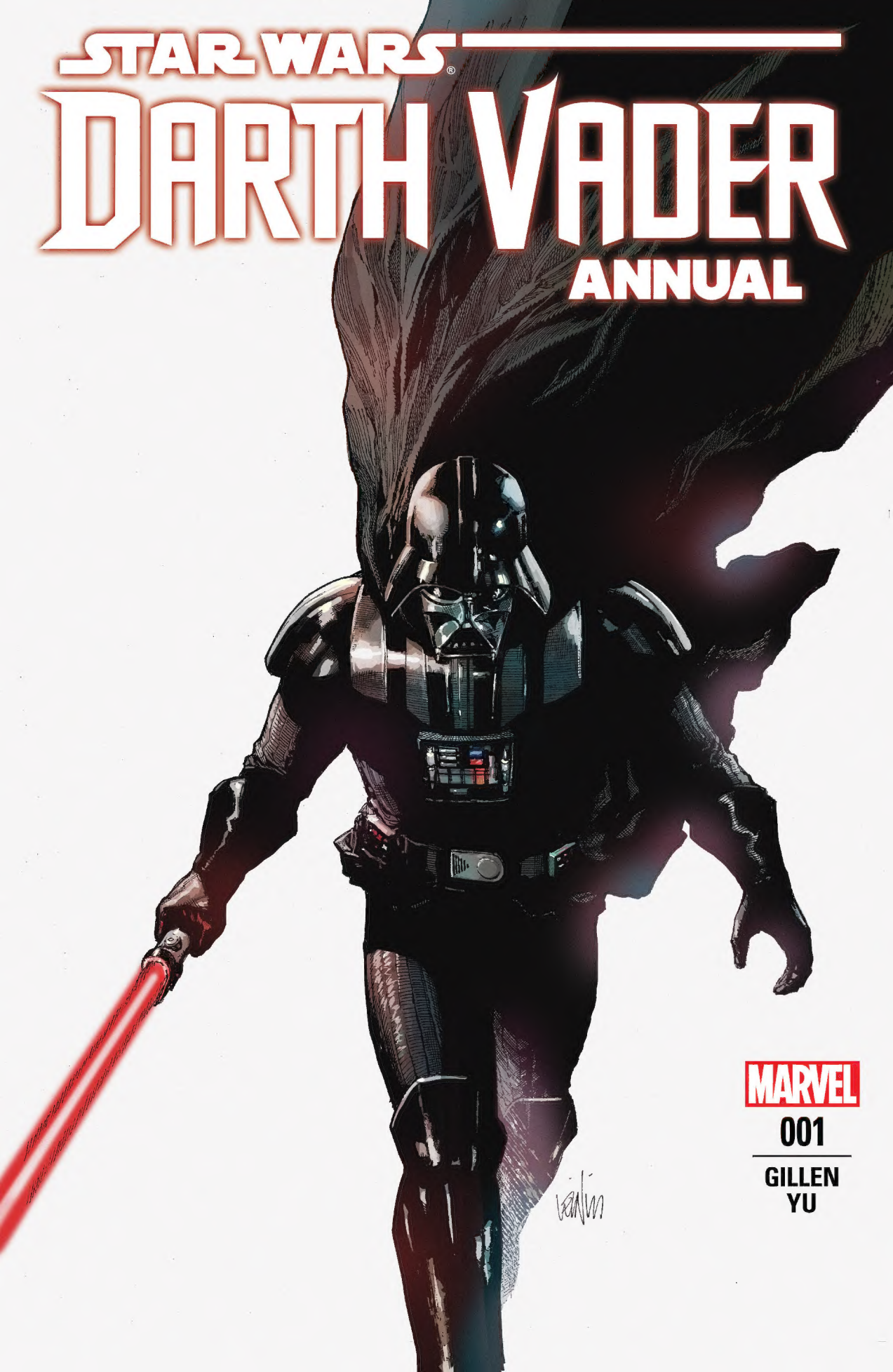
STAR WARS® DARTH VADER ANNUAL



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STAR WARS® DARTH VADER ANNUAL

DARTH VADER
Annual

It is a time of unrest. After the fall of the Republic, the Galactic Empire took over with an iron fist. Yet the Empire does not stand unchallenged as the rebels continue to fight back.

The destruction of the Death Star has ignited faith that the Rebellion will prevail, but the Emperor is determined to eliminate any and all threats. As more and more planets fall under Imperial control, Lord Vader travels to Shu-torun with a message to reinforce their cooperation....

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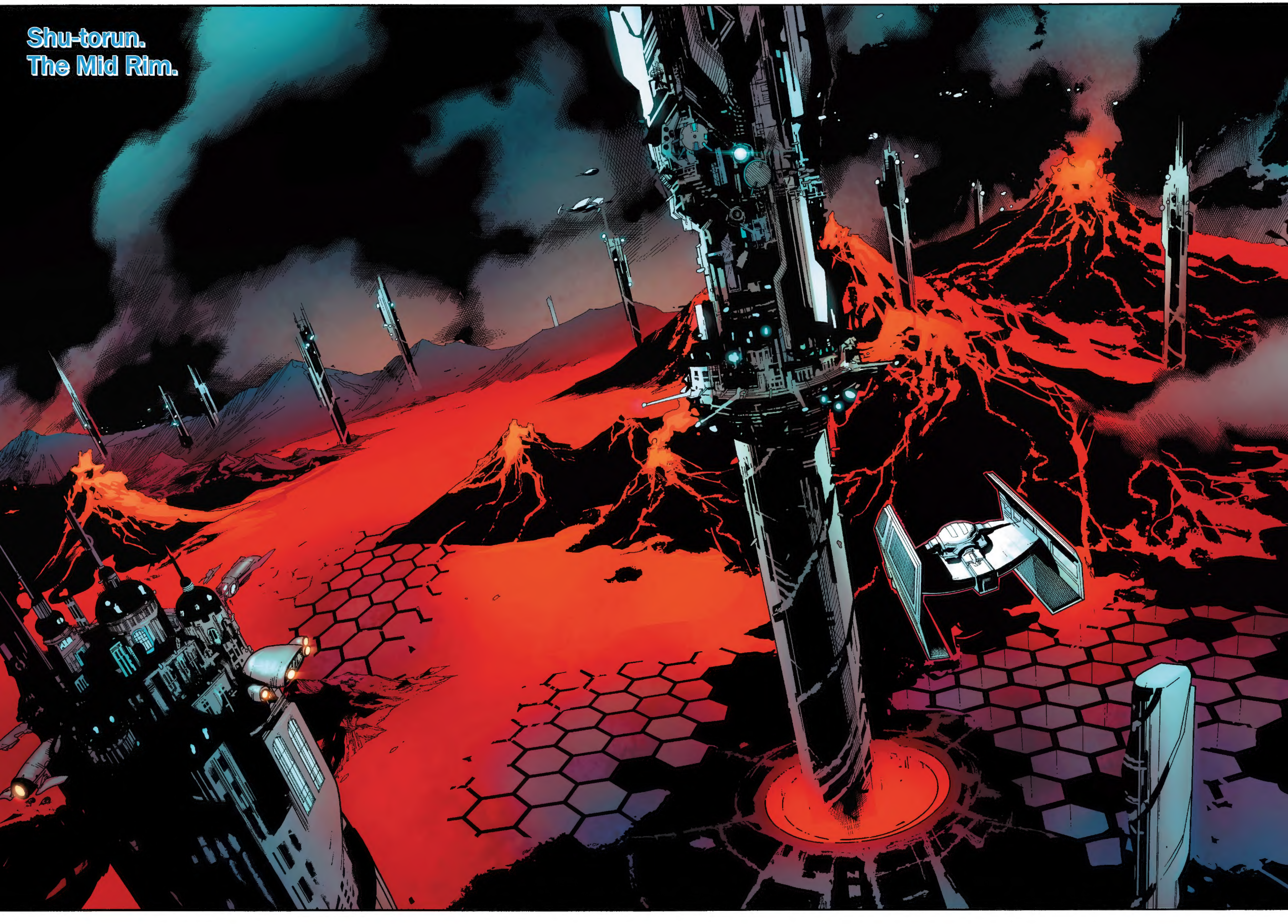
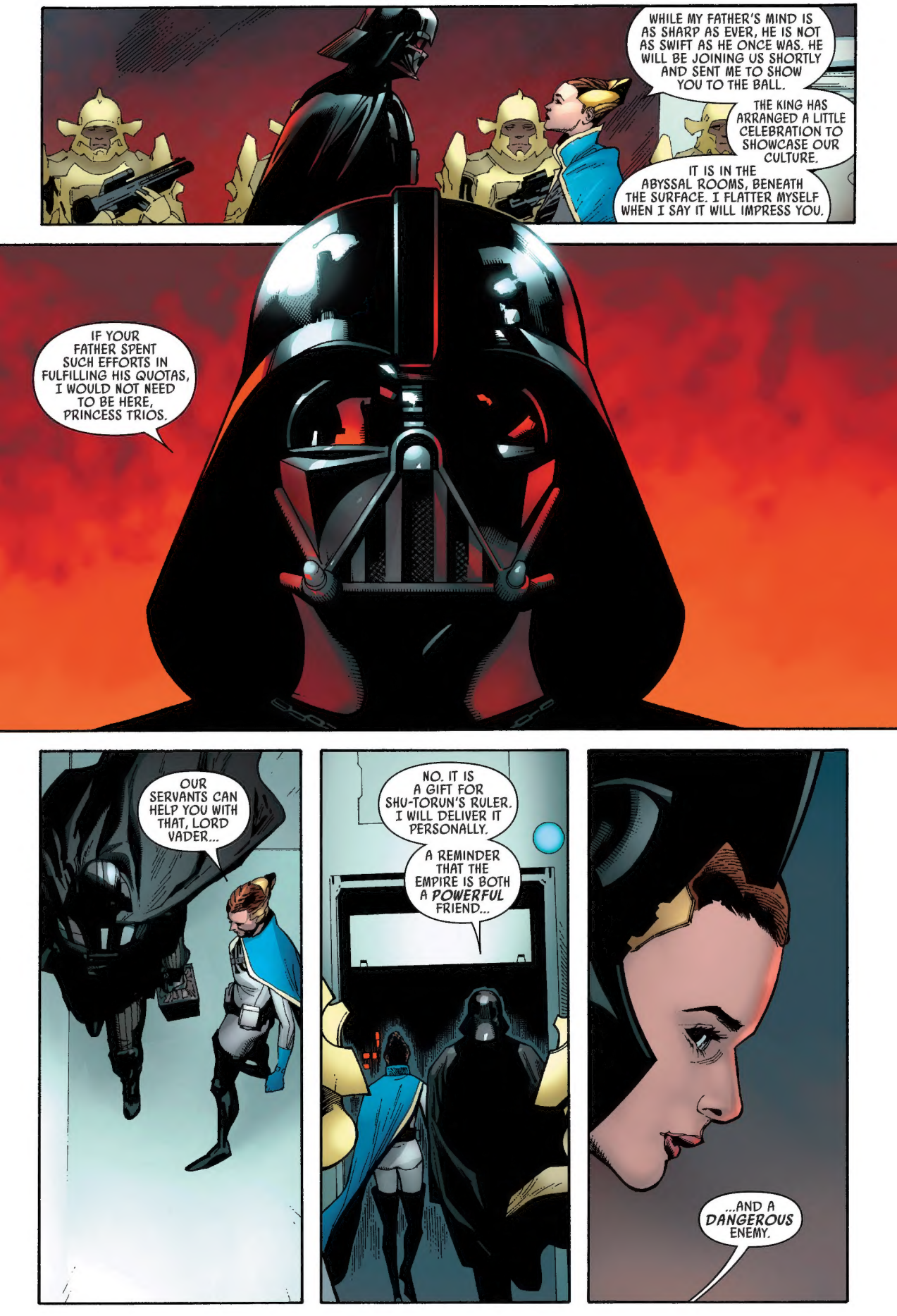
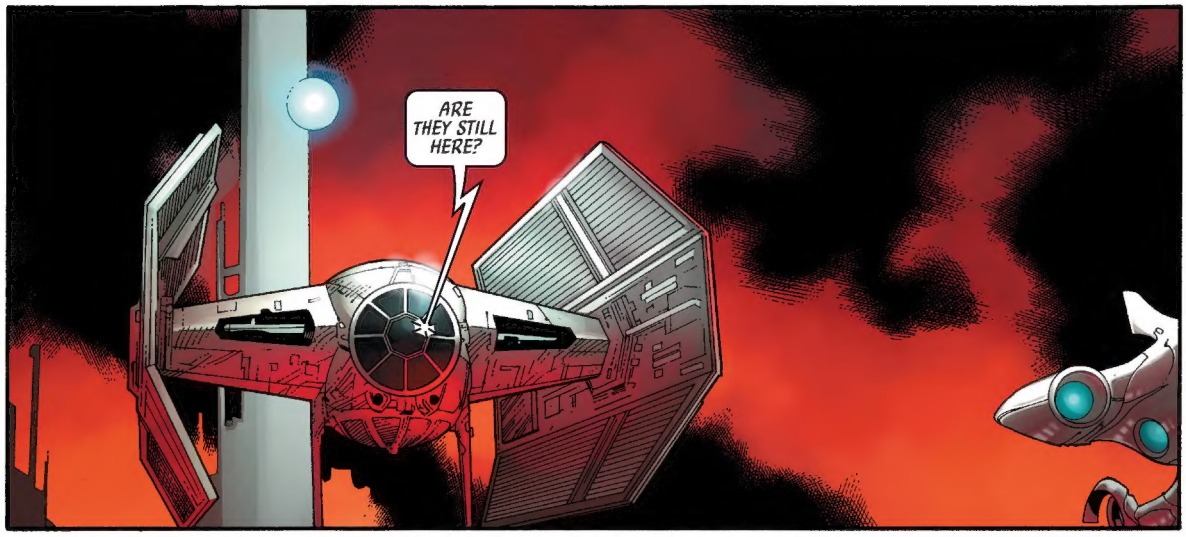
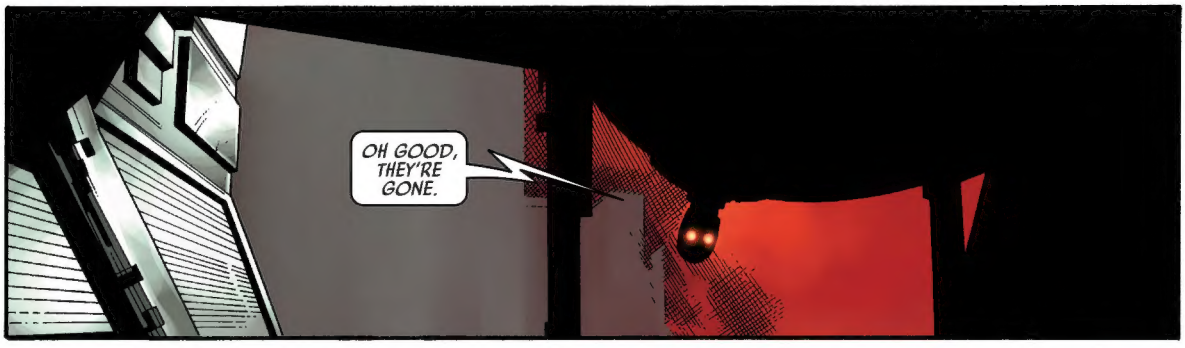
BLESSED IS A KING WITH A SURFEIT OF CHILDREN.
MONTHAN, MY FIRST CHILD.
WHEN I AM GONE, YOU WILL HAVE THE THRONE. YOU WILL RULE THIS WORLD OF ORE AND FIRE. YOU WILL LEAD OUR BLOODLINE ONTO FURTHER GLORY.
HOLLIAN, MY SECOND CHILD.
WHEN I AM GONE, YOU WILL BE THE CELEBRANT WARLORD, HEAD OF OUR WAR-FAITH. YOU WILL HARVEST THE BLOOD OF THOSE WHO STAND AGAINST US.
TRIOS, MY THIRD CHILD...
...YOUR BLOOD WILL SERVE IN *OTHER* WAYS.

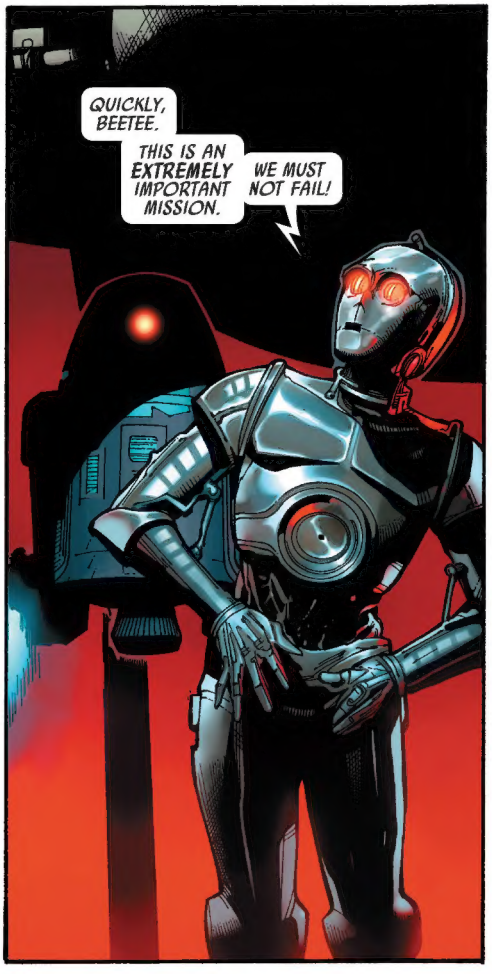

Shu-torun.
The Mid Rim.

YOU HAVE DISAPPOINTED ME, PRINCESS TRIOS.
THIS IS UNWISE.
I WAS EXPECTING YOUR FATHER.


WHILE MY FATHER'S MIND IS AS SHARP AS EVER, HE IS NOT AS SWIFT AS HE ONCE WAS. HE WILL BE JOINING US SHORTLY AND SENT ME TO SHOW YOU TO THE BALL.
THE KING HAS ARRANGED A LITTLE CELEBRATION TO SHOWCASE OUR CULTURE.
IT IS IN THE ABYSSAL ROOMS, BENEATH THE SURFACE. I FLATTER MYSELF WHEN I SAY IT WILL IMPRESS YOU.
IF YOUR FATHER SPENT SUCH EFFORTS IN FULFILLING HIS QUOTAS, I WOULD NOT NEED TO BE HERE, PRINCESS TRIOS.
OUR SERVANTS CAN HELP YOU WITH THAT, LORD VADER...
NO. IT IS A GIFT FOR SHU-TORUN'S RULER. I WILL DELIVER IT PERSONALLY.
A REMINDER THAT THE EMPIRE IS BOTH A POWERFUL FRIEND...
...AND A DANGEROUS ENEMY.

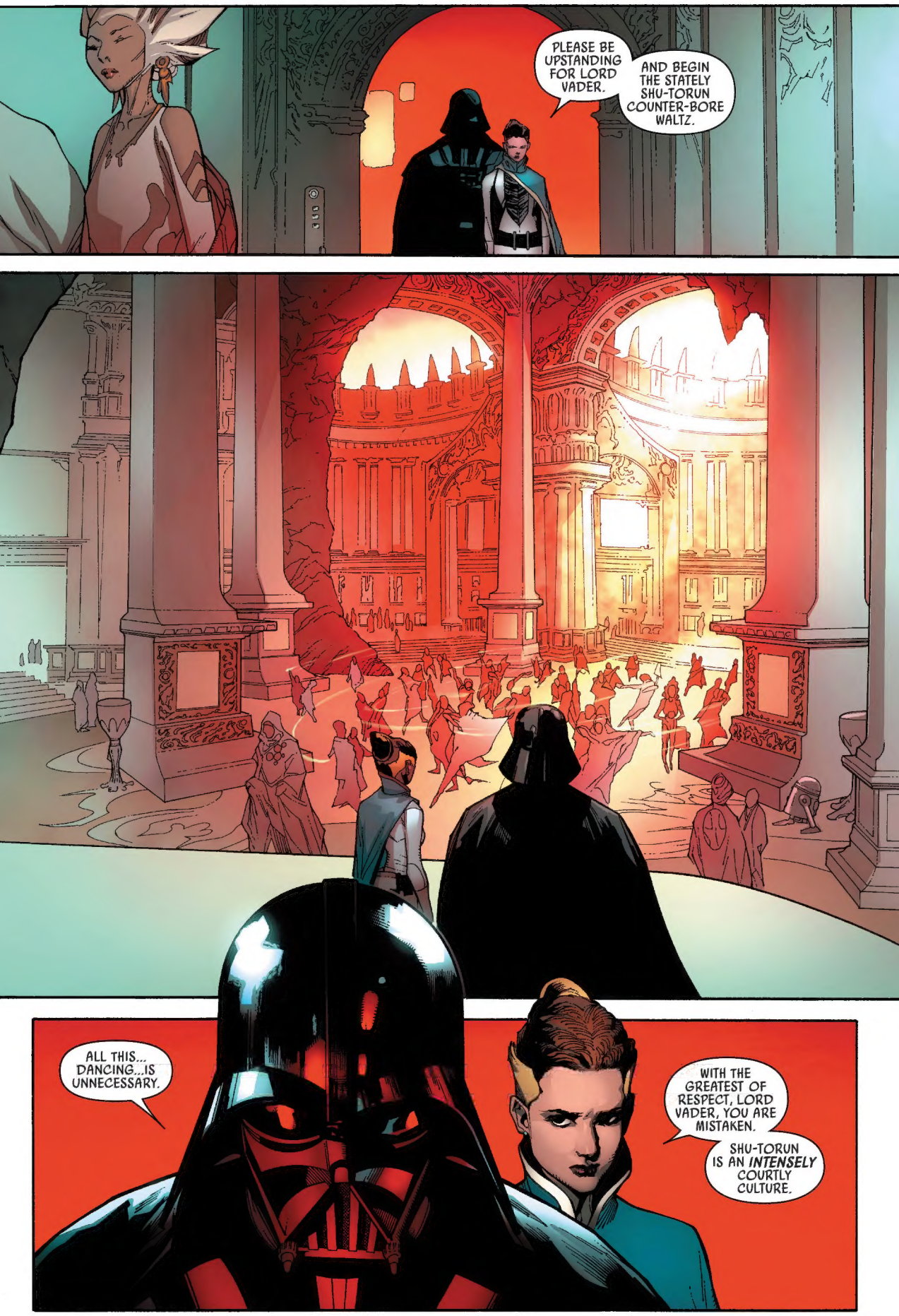

ARE THEY STILL HERE?


OH GOOD, THEY'RE GONE.

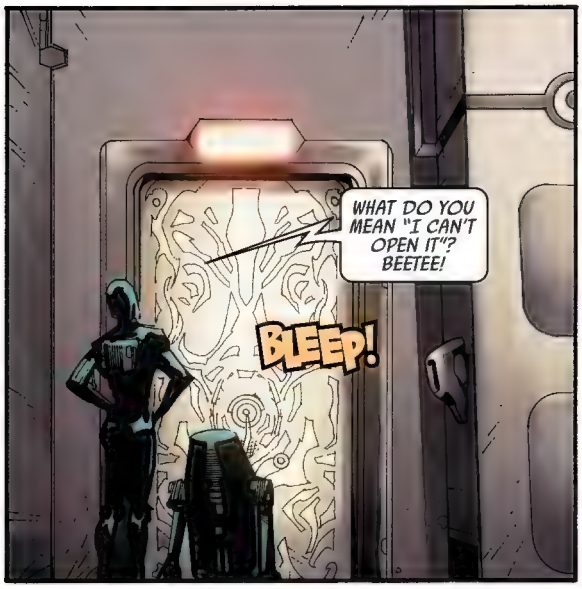

QUICKLY, BEETEE.
THIS IS AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT MISSION.
WE MUST NOT FAIL!

BLEEP!
NO, BEETEE. YOU CAN'T JUST SHOOT EVERYONE.
WE NEED TO BE SUBTLE.

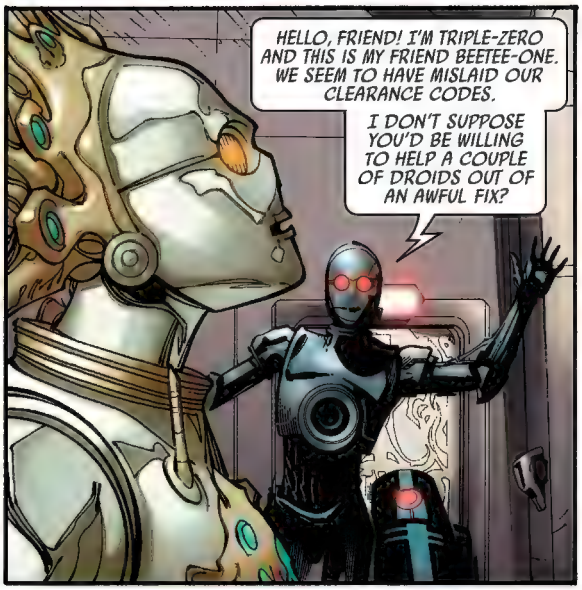
BLEEP! BLEEP!
YES, I HAVE BROUGHT ALL MY POISONS.

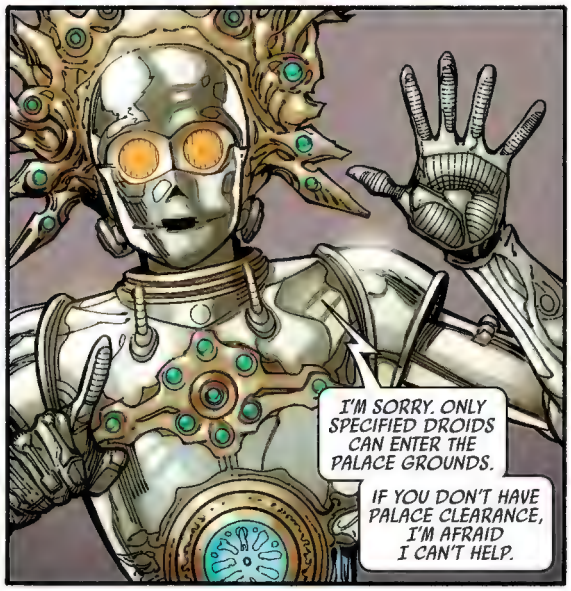

PLEASE BE UPSTANDING FOR LORD VADER.
AND BEGIN THE STATELY SHU-TORUN COUNTER-BORE WALTZ.
ALL THIS... DANCING...IS UNNECESSARY.
WITH THE GREATEST OF RESPECT, LORD VADER, YOU ARE MISTAKEN.
SHU-TORUN IS AN *INTENSELY* COURTLY CULTURE.

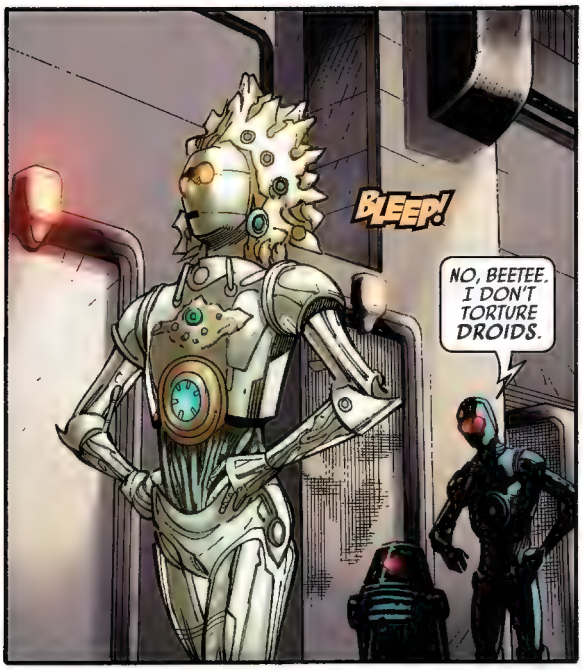
THE ORE-DUKES' DOMAINS ARE OFTEN IN THE HEART OF THE HARSHEST OF ENVIRONMENTS. THEY BRING THE RAREST OF MINERALS TO THE SPIRES, WHERE THEY ARE EXPORTED.
THEY WORK HARD AND THEY LIVE GRANDLY.
THE EMPIRE DOES NOT CARE HOW YOU SUPPLY THE ORES, ONLY THAT YOU DO.
AS IS THE EMPIRE'S PREROGATIVE, LORD VADER, BUT MY FATHER NEEDS TO DEAL WITH THE... IMPURITIES.
AND THESE NEW DEMANDS ARE CRIPPLING.
"LETTING THE DUKES FEEL INVOLVED IN CEREMONIES LIKE THIS IS OUR ATTEMPT TO PLAY TO THEIR EGOS, TO KEEP THEM COMPLIANT.
"WITHOUT SUCH GESTURES, THEY WOULD LEAN TOWARDS REBELLION."
WHAT IS THE NEED FOR SO MUCH ORE SO SWIFTLY?
THE EMPIRE IS BUILDING.
IT IS ALWAYS BUILDING.

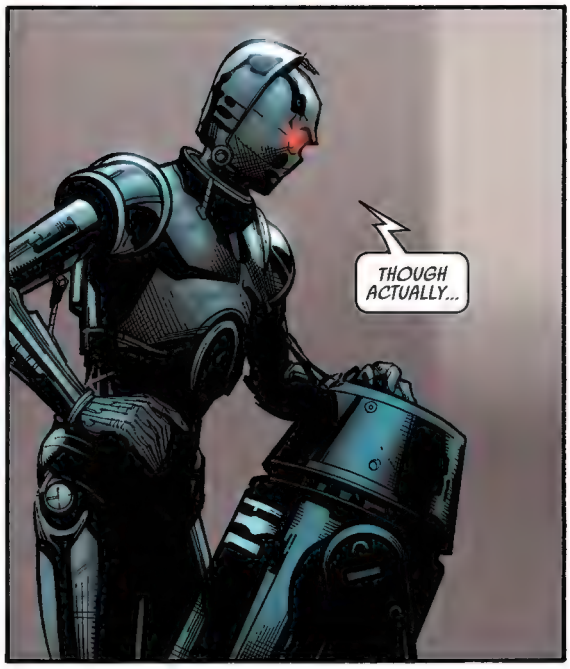

WHAT DO YOU MEAN "I CAN'T OPEN IT"? BEETEE!
BLEEP!

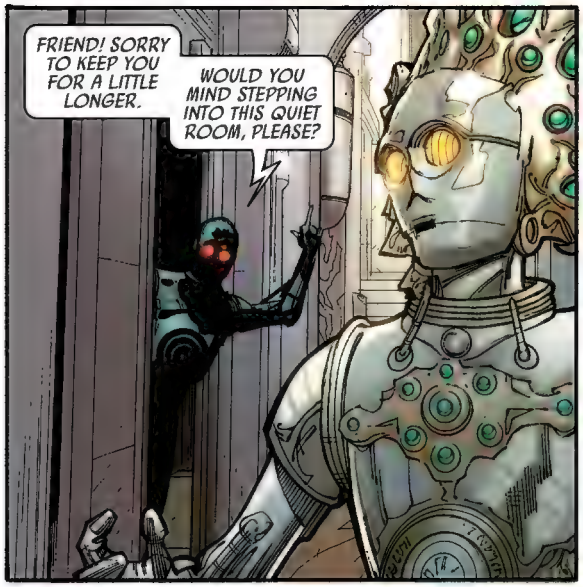
THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE. WE HAVE A VERY IMPORTANT MISSION! MASTER VADER WILL BE MOST DISAPPOINTED.
AH...

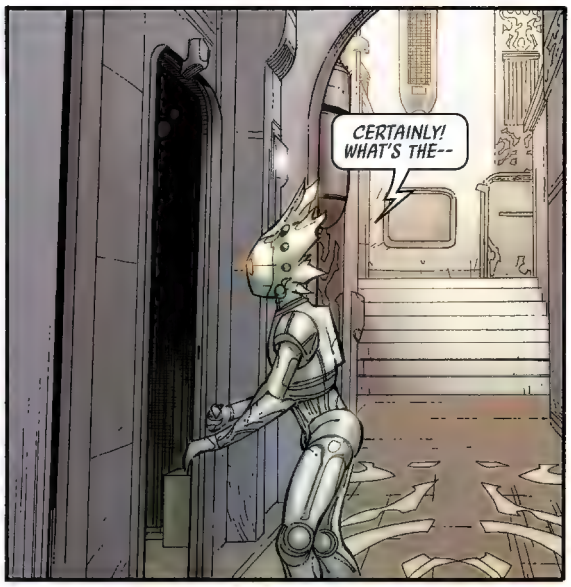

HELLO, FRIEND! I'M TRIPLE-ZERO AND THIS IS MY FRIEND BEETEE-ONE. WE SEEM TO HAVE MISLAID OUR CLEARANCE CODES.
I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU'D BE WILLING TO HELP A COUPLE OF DROIDS OUT OF AN AWFUL FIX?

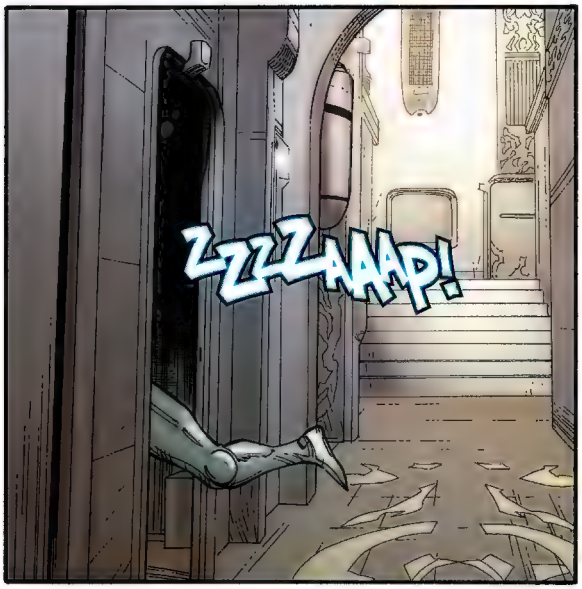

I'M SORRY. ONLY SPECIFIED DROIDS CAN ENTER THE PALACE GROUNDS.
IF YOU DON'T HAVE PALACE CLEARANCE, I'M AFRAID I CAN'T HELP.

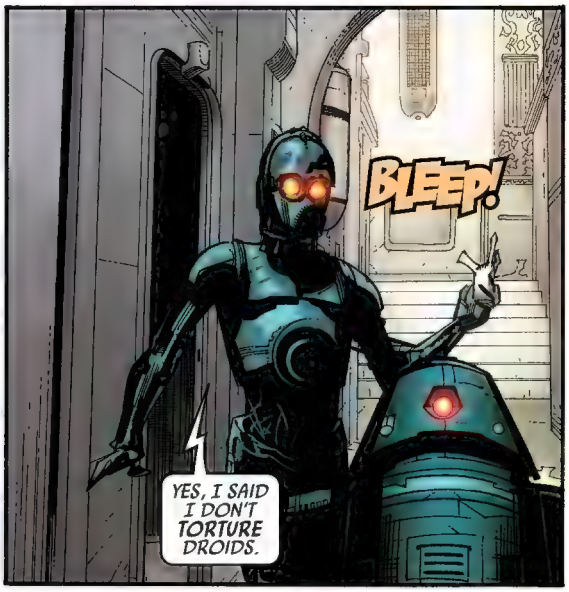

BLEEP!
NO, BEETEE. I DON'T TORTURE DROIDS.


THOUGH ACTUALLY...

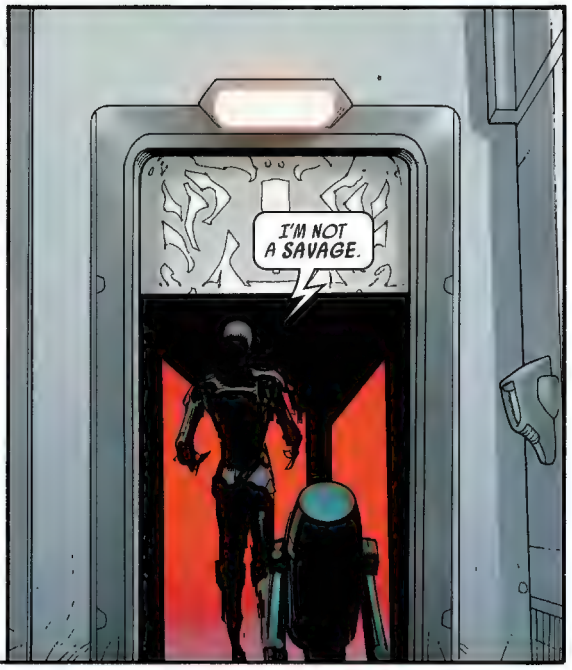

FRIEND! SORRY TO KEEP YOU FOR A LITTLE LONGER.
WOULD YOU MIND STEPPING INTO THIS QUIET ROOM, PLEASE?


CERTAINLY! WHAT'S THE--


ZZZZAAAP!

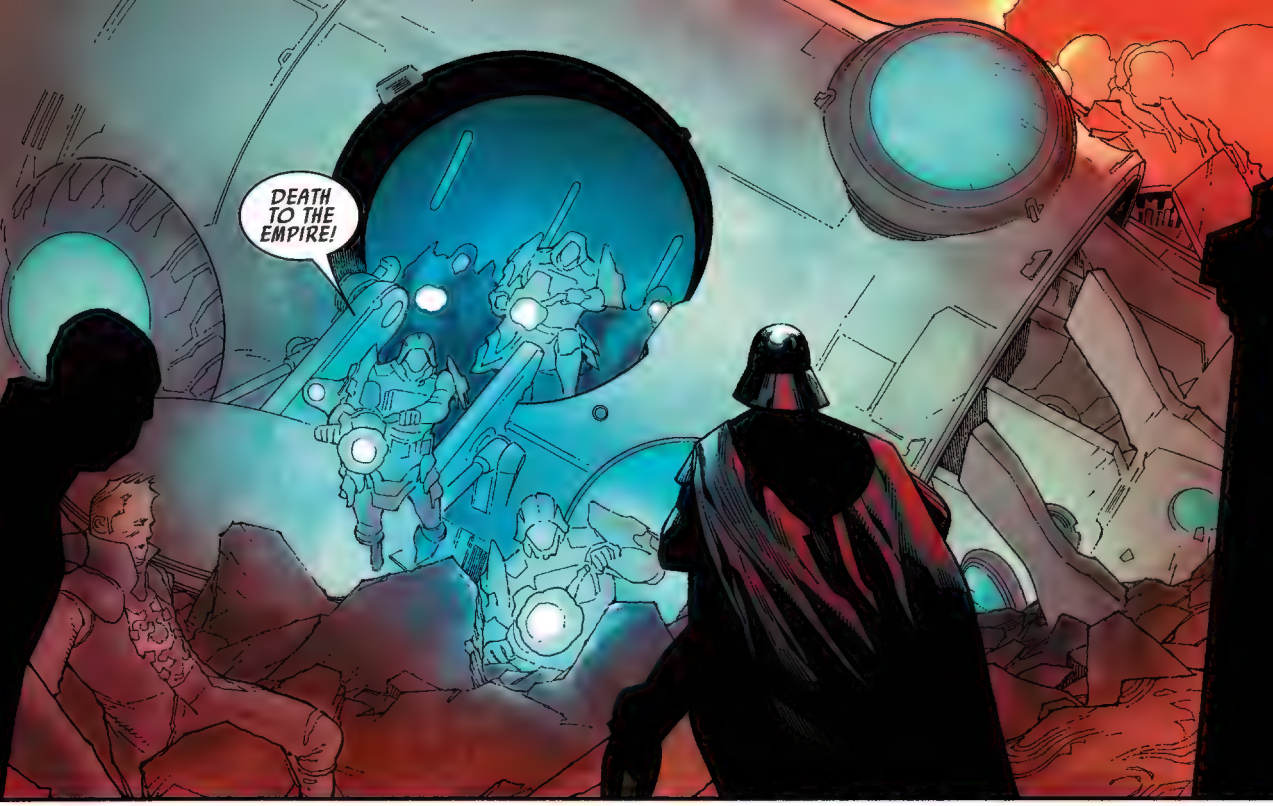

BLEEP!
YES, I SAID I DON'T TORTURE DROIDS.

I TURNED OFF ITS PAIN RECEPTORS BEFORE STRIPPING ITS DATA CORE.

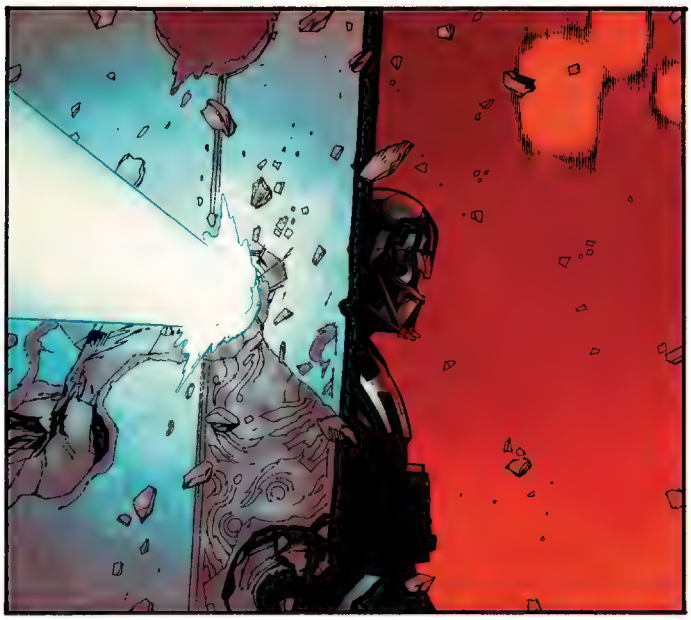

I'M NOT A SAVAGE.

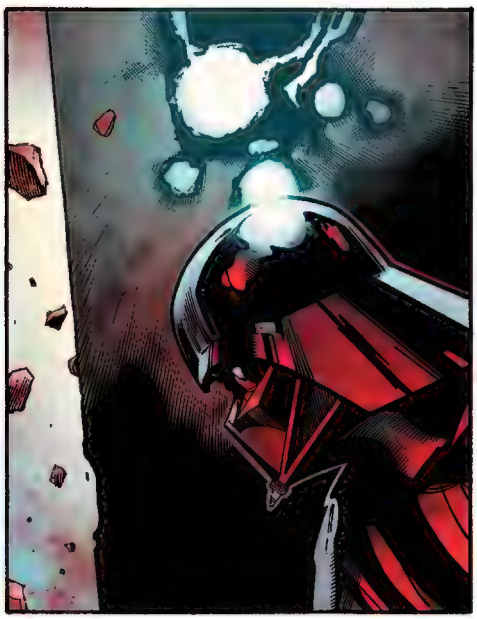
LORD VADER...
MY DAUGHTER WISHES TO DANCE. I MUST *INSIST*.
DUKE RUBIX, I WOULD WARN AGAINST THIS...
NO, I MUST INSIST HE DANCE. THIS INSULT WILL NOT BE BORNE.
IF ONE IS HERE, ONE *MUST* DANCE.
VERY WELL.
LET US.

DO ANY OTHERS WISH TO BE MY PARTNER?
I THOUGHT--

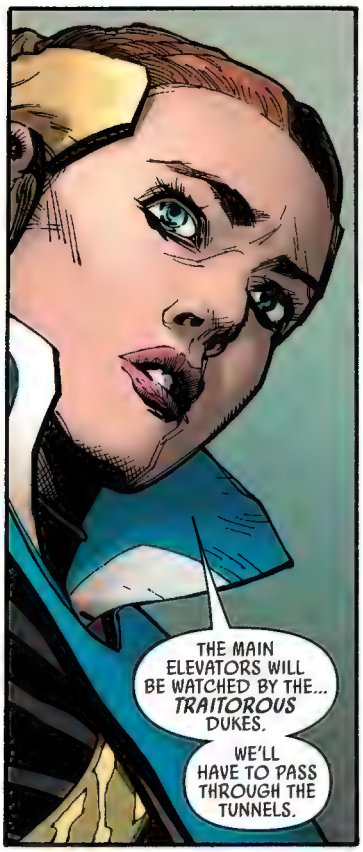

DEATH TO THE EMPIRE!

DOWN WITH THE KING!

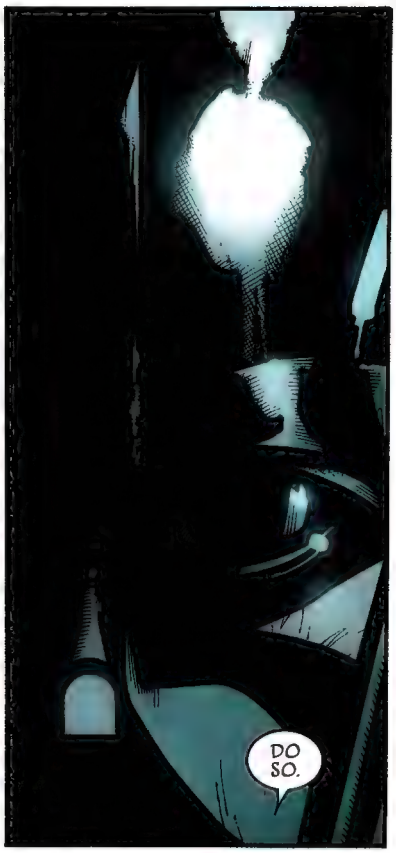




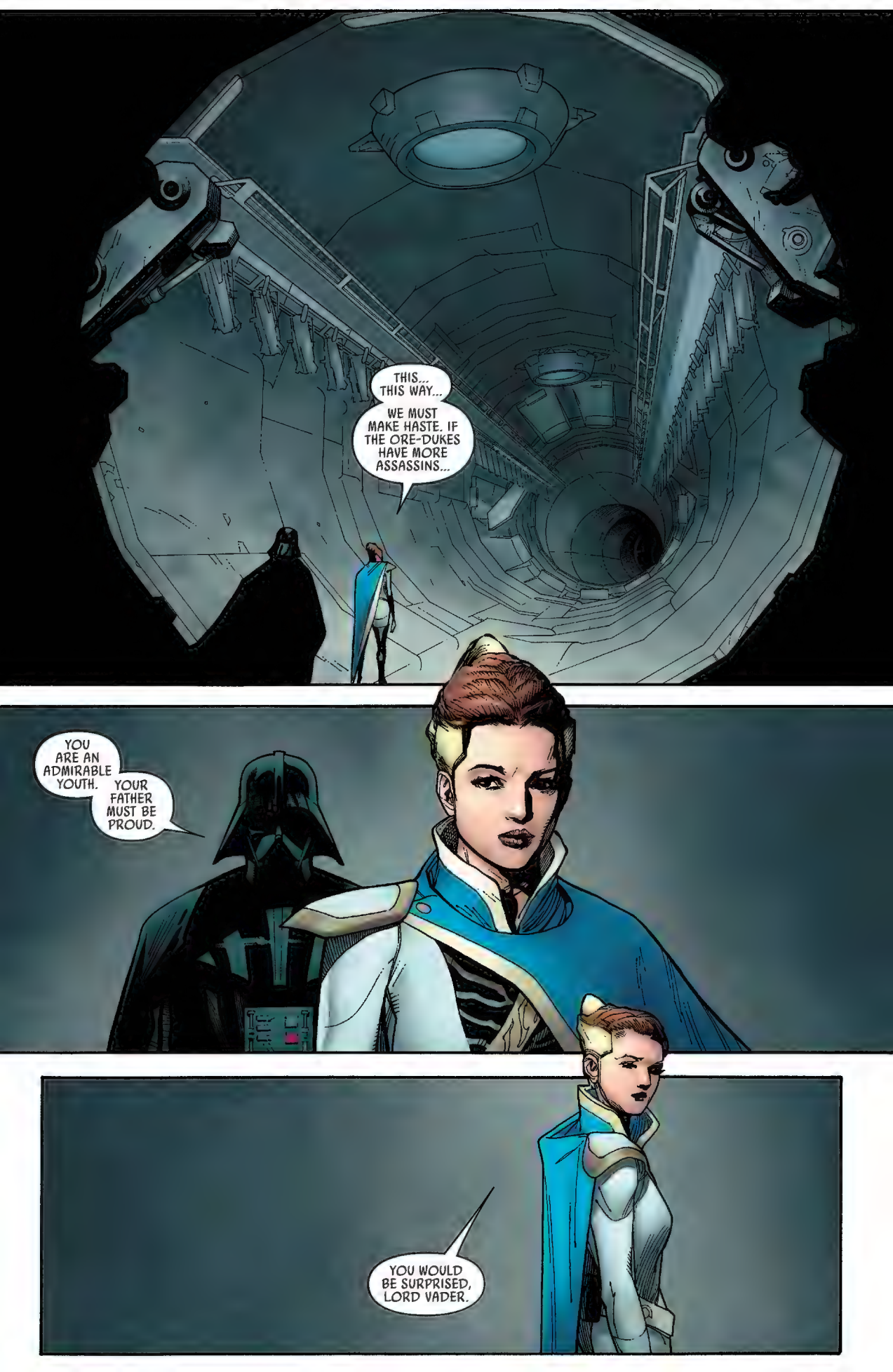
I WILL SEE THE KING.
IMMEDIATELY.


THE MAIN ELEVATORS WILL BE WATCHED BY THE... TRAITOROUS DUKES.
WE'LL HAVE TO PASS THROUGH THE TUNNELS.

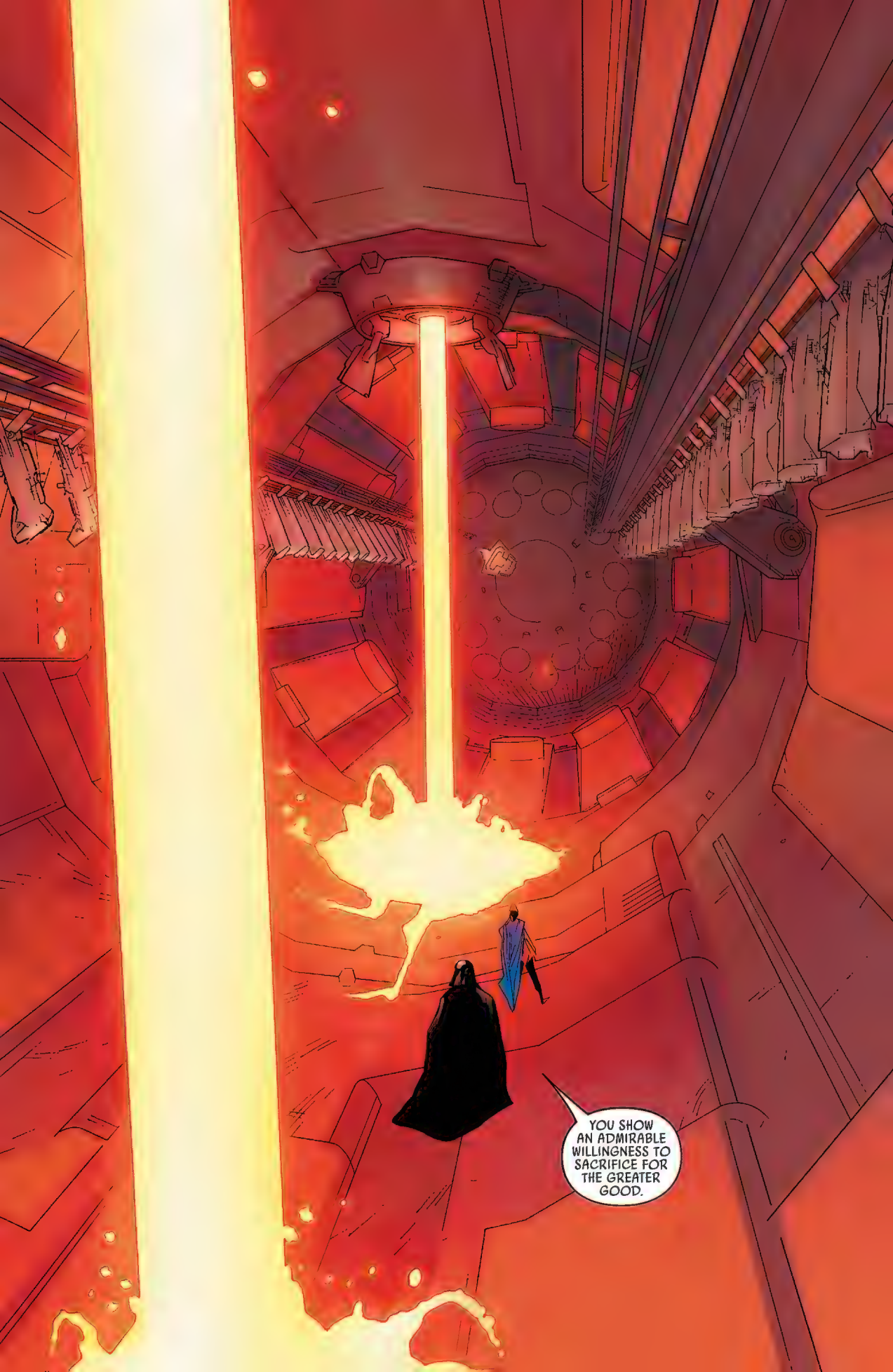
I CAN SHOW YOU THE WAY.

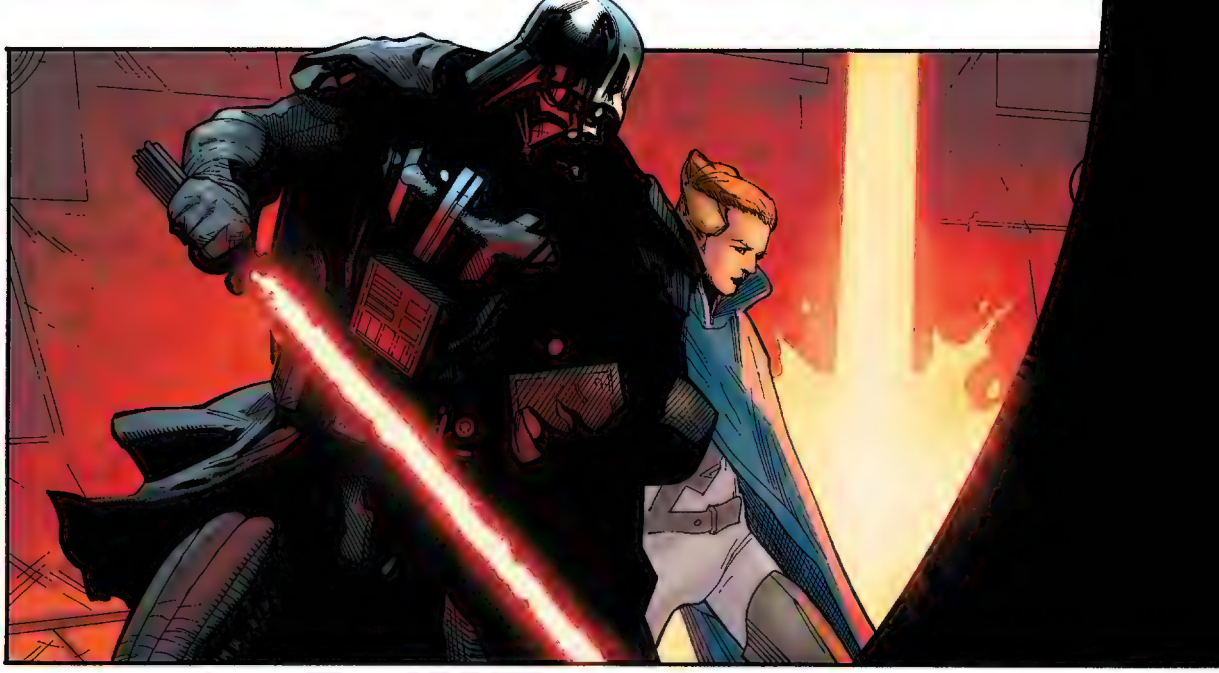

DO SO.

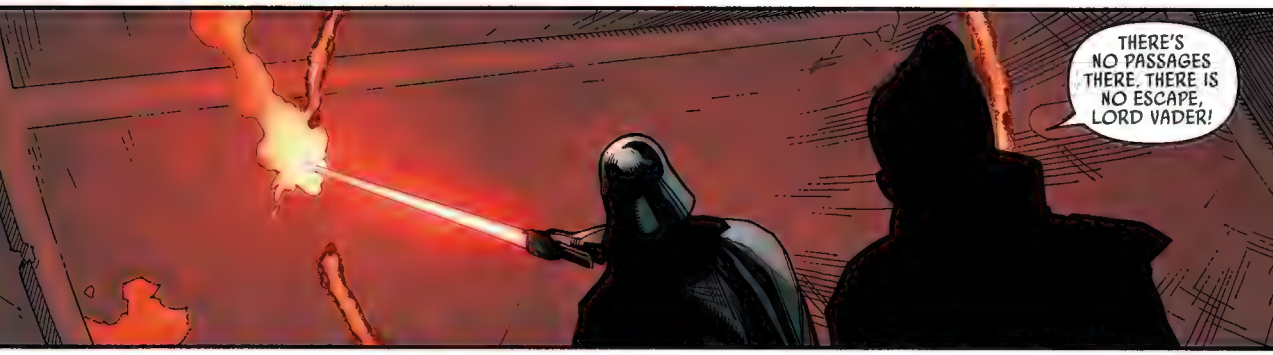
VADER IS EVERYTHING HIS REPUTATION SUGGESTED.
STUPID, USELESS ASSASSINS. AT LEAST VADER STILL SUSPECTS NOTHING...
I HAD HOPED IT WOULD NOT HAVE COME TO THIS...
TRIOS WAS A GOOD DAUGHTER.
IT IS A SHAME TO LOSE HER IN A TRAGIC ACCIDENT.
FASCINATING, YOUR MAJESTY!
I FIND A REFRESHING BEVERAGE IS IDEAL WHEN WATCHING TRAGIC ACCIDENTS!

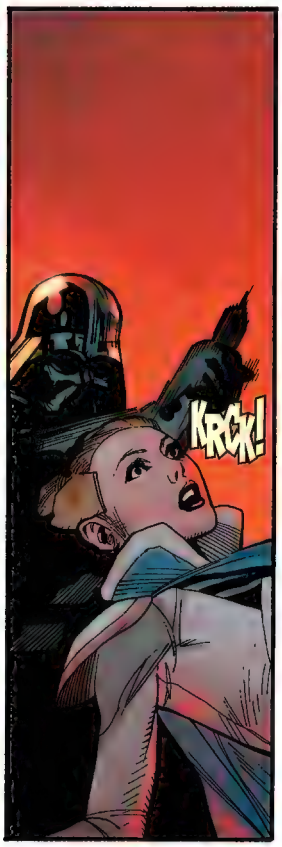

THIS... THIS WAY...
WE MUST MAKE HASTE. IF THE ORE-DUKES HAVE MORE ASSASSINS...
YOU ARE AN ADMIRABLE YOUTH.
YOUR FATHER MUST BE PROUD.
YOU WOULD BE SURPRISED, LORD VADER.

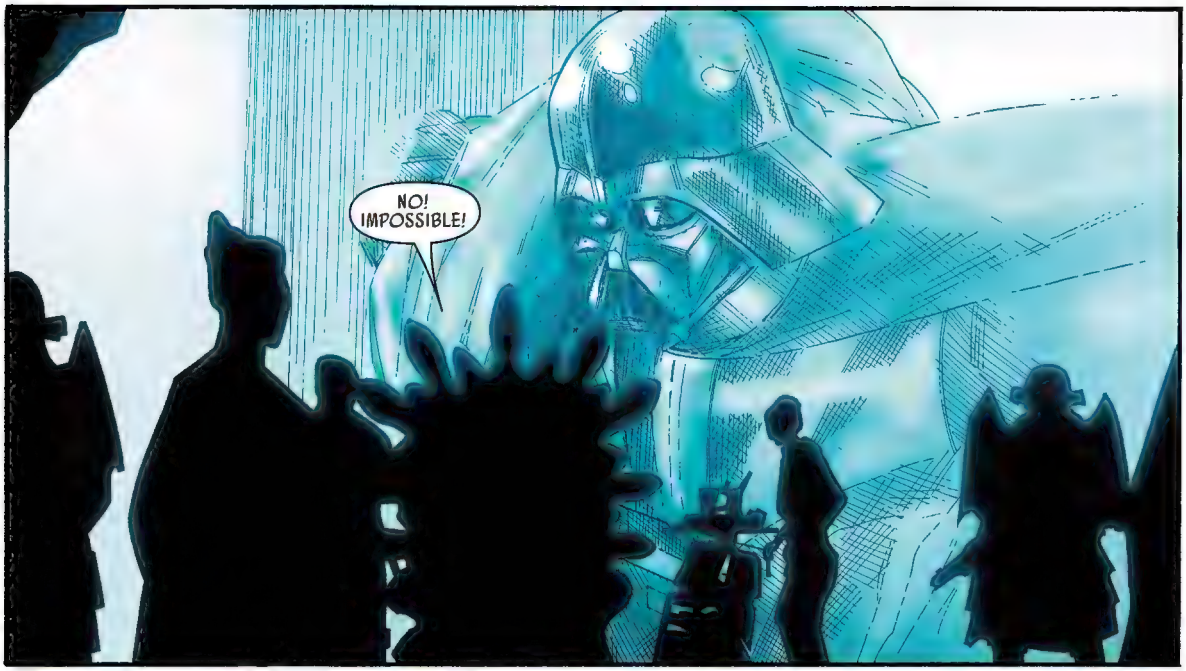
HMM.
YOUR FATHER SHOULD BE PROUD.


YOU SHOW AN ADMIRABLE WILLINGNESS TO SACRIFICE FOR THE GREATER GOOD.

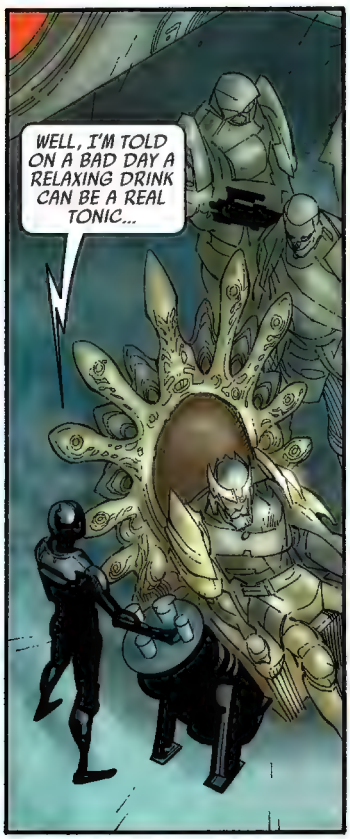


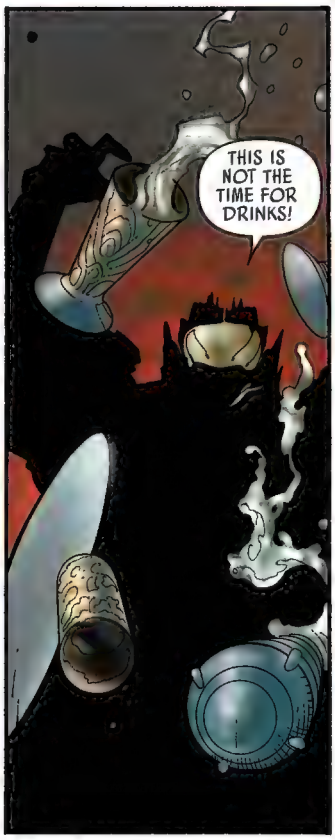

THERE'S NO PASSAGES THERE. THERE IS NO ESCAPE, LORD VADER!

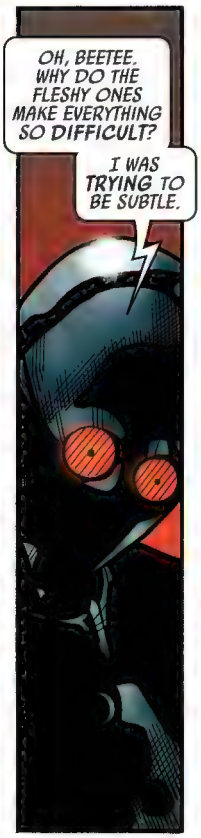

KRCK!


NO! IMPOSSIBLE!

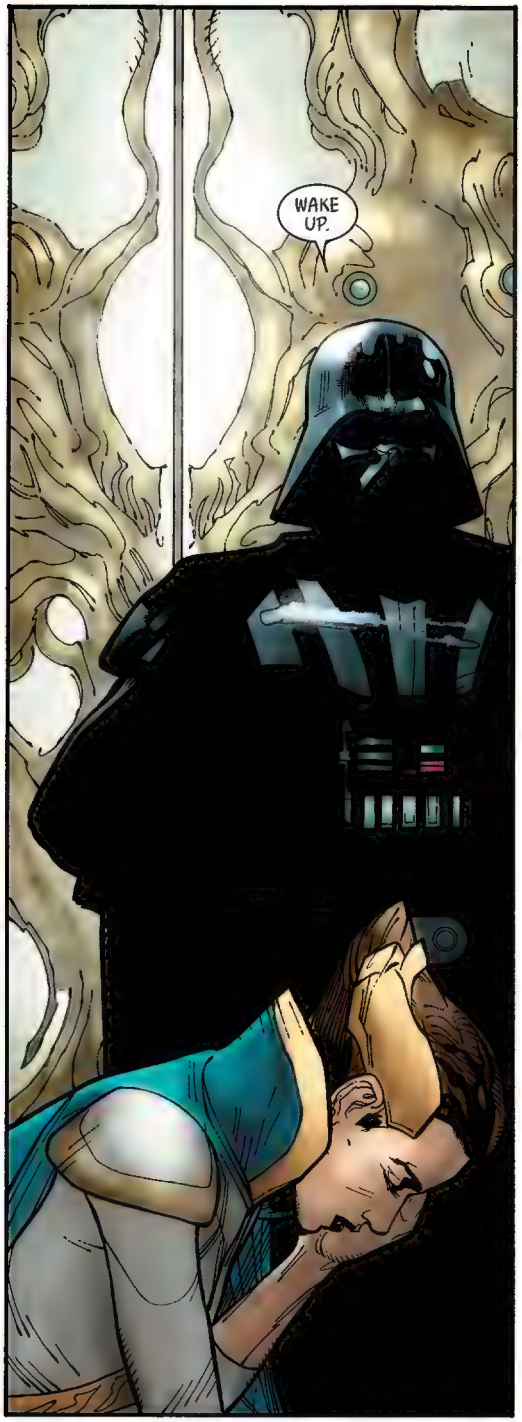
SEAL THE DOORS! IMMEDIATELY!
HE'LL BE COMING FOR US! GUARDS! MORE GUARDS!


WELL, I'M TOLD ON A BAD DAY A RELAXING DRINK CAN BE A REAL TONIC...


THIS IS NOT THE TIME FOR DRINKS!

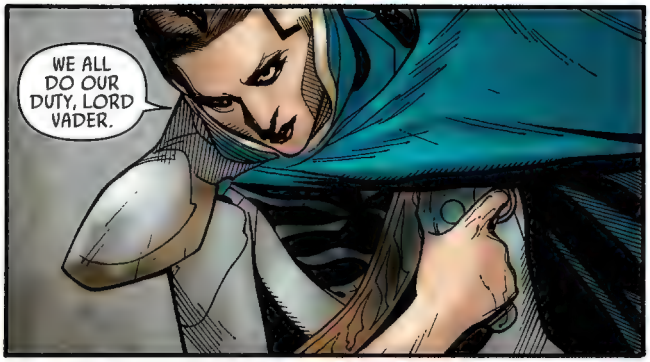

OH, BEETEE. WHY DO THE FLESHY ONES MAKE EVERYTHING SO DIFFICULT?
I WAS TRYING TO BE SUBTLE.

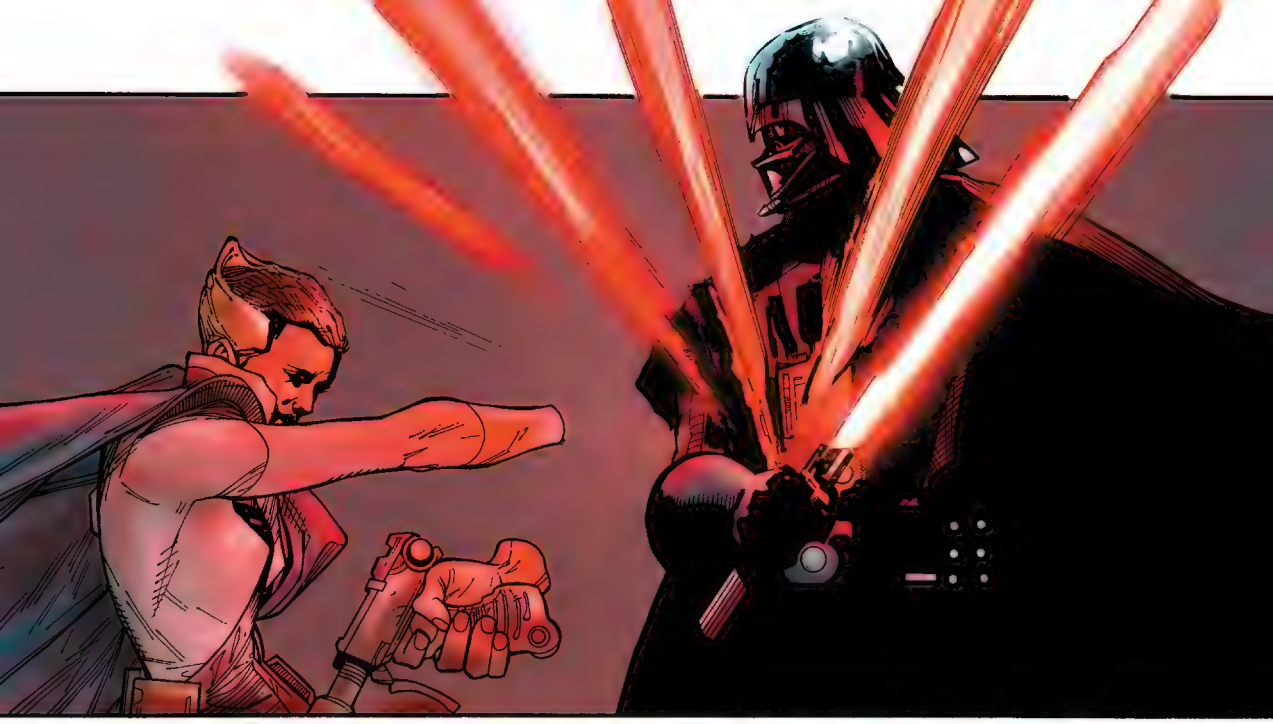
BLEEP!
OH, VERY WELL. YOU WIN. THEY DID SPILL MY DRINKS.

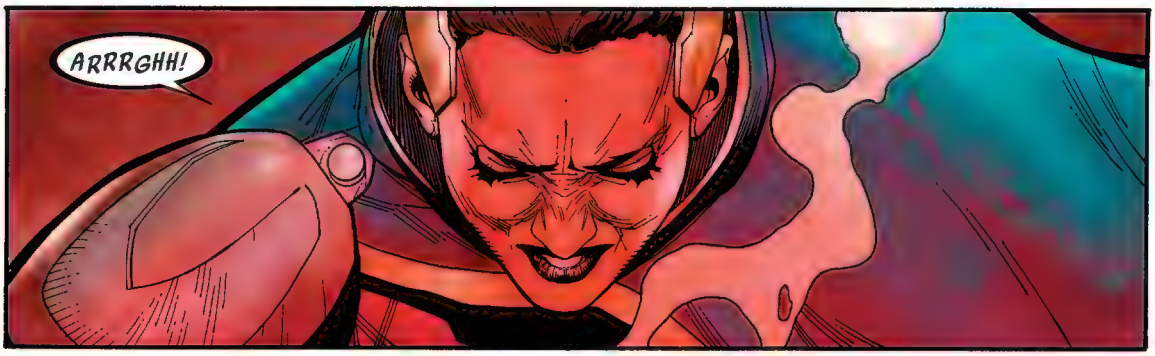

WAKE UP.

NO. NO. WHAT...

THE GUARDS DID THEIR DUTY.
JUST AS YOU DID YOURS.

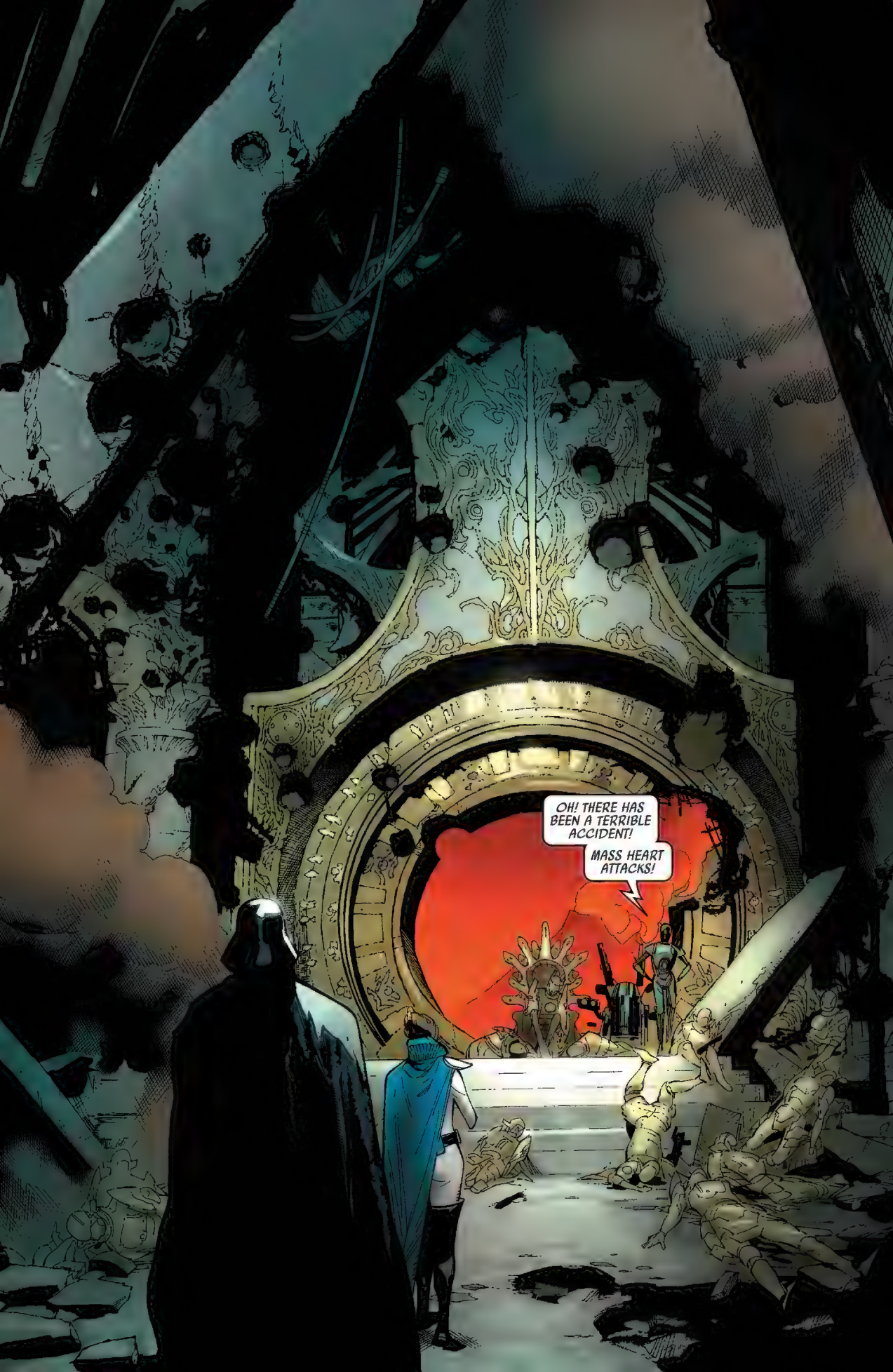

WE ALL DO OUR DUTY, LORD VADER.



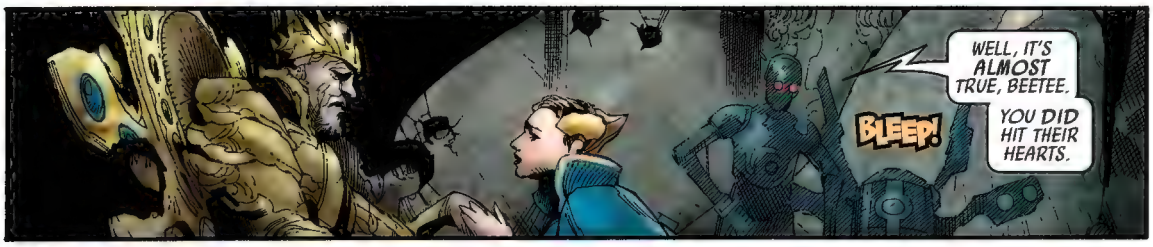

ARRRGHH!

NO, YOU CAN'T!
THE KING! MY FATHER!

I WON'T.


OH! THERE HAS BEEN A TERRIBLE ACCIDENT!
MASS HEART ATTACKS!

NO! NO!


WELL, IT'S ALMOST TRUE, BEETEE.
YOU DID HIT THEIR HEARTS.
BLEEP!

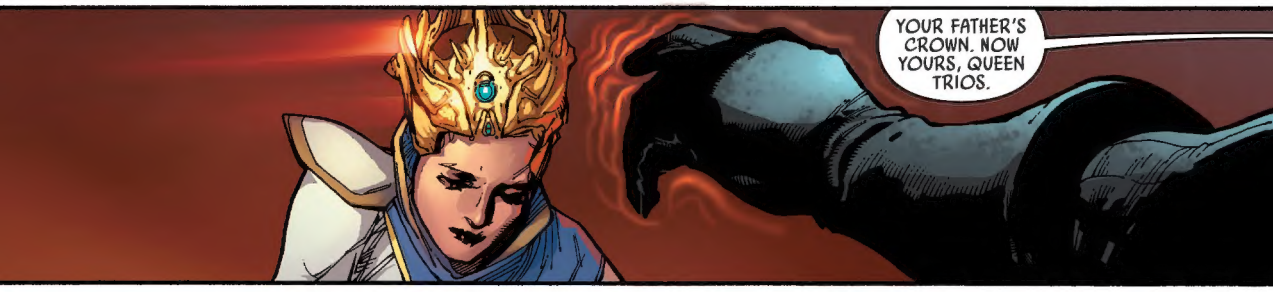
YOU ARE IMPRESSIVELY ACCURATE AND AN ABSOLUTE PROFESSIONAL.
I'D HAVE DIRECTED THE SHOTS TOWARDS THEIR ABDOMENS, JUST TO HURT A LITTLE MORE.

YOUR MAJESTY...

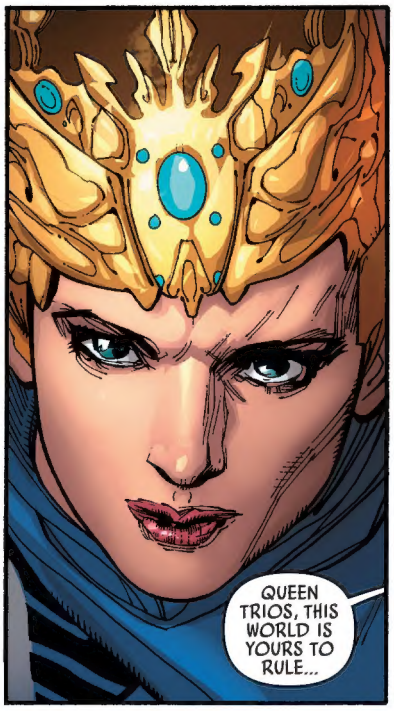
...THIS IS YOURS.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
WHAT... IS IT?
AS A PRINCESS, YOU SERVED YOUR FATHER. AS A QUEEN, YOU SERVE YOUR PEOPLE.
THIS IS A SMALL REMINDER OF WHAT HAPPENS TO WORLDS WHO RESIST THE EMPEROR.
THIS IS WHAT REMAINS OF *ALDERAAN*.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE DEATH STAR HAS GIVEN A CERTAIN OVERCONFIDENCE TO THE REBELS. THEY THINK IT MEANS THE EMPIRE CAN BE RESISTED.

THEY ARE MISTAKEN.

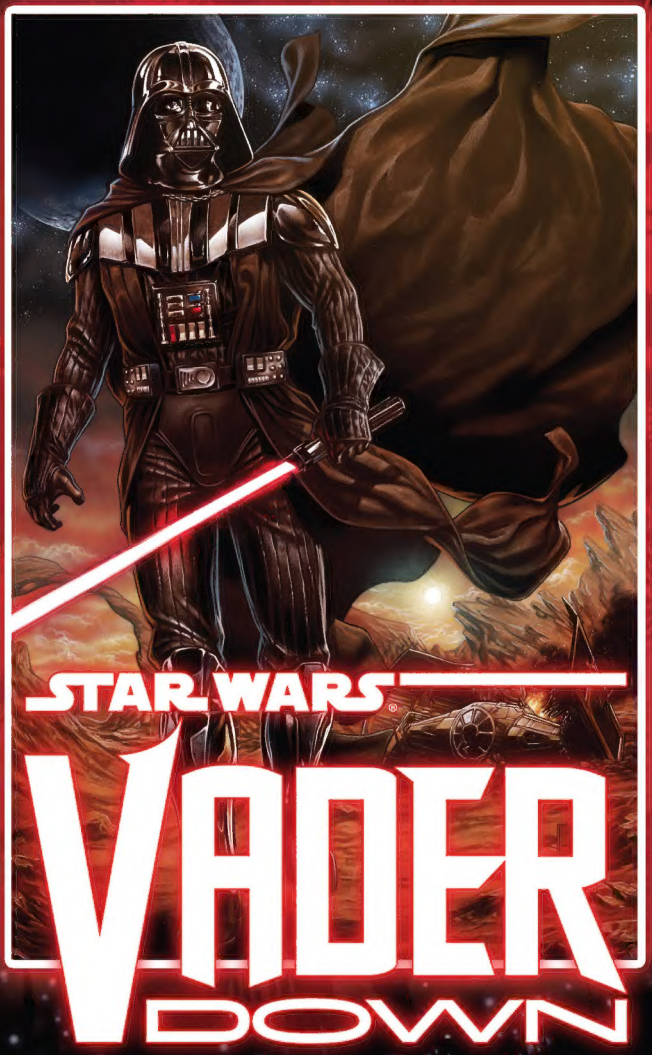

YOUR FATHER'S CROWN. NOW YOURS, QUEEN TRIOS.

THE ORE-DUKES ARE RESISTANT TO THE TITHES. IT'S WHAT MOVED MY FATHER AGAINST YOU.
IF THEY REBEL, THEY'LL--
BE PACIFIED BY A WISE MONARCH AND HER *POWERFUL* FRIENDS.


QUEEN TRIOS, THIS WORLD IS YOURS TO RULE...

...BUT DO NOT FORGET WHOM YOU SERVE.

THE SAGA CONTINUES IN...



- VADER DOWN #1 - PART 1
- DARTH VADER #13 - PART 2
- STAR WARS #13 - PART 3
- DARTH VADER #14 - PART 4
- STAR WARS #14 - PART 5
- DARTH VADER #15 - PART 6